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<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/550,825	BUCHANAN, NIGEL ALEXANDER	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	David B. Thomas	3723	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 5/18/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-13 and 15.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some\*    c) ☐ None    of the:
    1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
    - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)</li><li>2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)</li><li>3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),<br/>Paper No./Mail Date <u>10/24/05</u></li><li>4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br/>of Biological Material</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application</li><li>6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br/>Paper No./Mail Date _____</li><li>7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment</li><li>8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance</li><li>9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li></ol> |
|---|--|

  
David B. Thomas  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3723

## **NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE**

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

1. Claims 1-13 and 15 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: that a resilient split ring is sprung into an aperture through the head, where a handle, pivotally coupled to the head portion, cooperates with the split ring; and that a resilient split ring is located in an aperture through the head, the split ring being sprung into the aperture and operable by the handle between a first open position and a second closed position, together in combination with the rest of the limitations in the independent claims, has neither been anticipated nor rendered obvious by the art of record considered as a whole, alone or in combination.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David B. Thomas whose telephone number is (571) 272-4497. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8am-7pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph J. Hail can be reached on (571) 272-4485. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

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Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

dbt



David B. Thomas  
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Art Unit 3723